

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank Examiners Katcheves and Friedman for the telephone interview held on March 17, 2005. During the interview, Applicants' attorney submitted that the prior art of record fails to teach protecting an object from encroaching elements such as water, fire, plant growth, and pests, but rather focused on anchoring an object. The Examiners respectfully disagreed, and possible amendments to the independent claims were discussed. Accordingly, with this response, Applicants are amending the independent claims to further clarify the invention. Additionally, the Examiners stated that amending the specification to include a composition (*i.e.* percent of bentonite in the "bentonite based material") would not constitute new matter. Consequently, no new matter is added by these amendments

Claims 1-10, 12-14, 16, 17, and 19 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,946,569 to Stuber (hereinafter "Stuber") in view of U.S. Patent No. 237,172 to Dentler (hereinafter "Dentler"). Claims 11, 15, and 20 are stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable in view of Stuber, Dentler, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,048,605 to Toon (hereinafter "Toon"). Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuber in view of Dentler and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,399,544 to Fairchild (hereinafter "Fairchild").

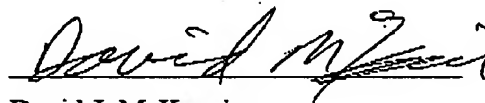
CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103. As a result of the amendments made to the claims, Applicants assert that independent claims 1, 13, and 20 are in condition for prompt allowance. Applicants have not specifically traversed the rejections of dependent claims 2-12, or 14-

19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), which depend from independent claims 1 and 13, but believes those claims to be allowable by depending from an allowable claim.

Should additional information be required regarding the traversal of the rejections of the dependent claims enumerated above, Examiner is respectfully asked to notify Applicants of such need. If any impediments to the prompt allowance of the claims can be resolved by a telephone conversation, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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